

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 172

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Olive Teresa McKenna for her meritorious service to Liberty Elementary School.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to honor those citizens who have given unselfishly of their time and talents to improve the quality of life for the youth of our State; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable educator is Mrs. Olive Teresa McKenna of Franklin, who has distinguished herself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity; she devoted her entire career, and continues to devote her spare time, to providing the highest quality education for students; and

WHEREAS, Olive McKenna, affectionately known as Mrs. Ollie, is a full-time volunteer at Liberty Elementary School; just under ninety years old, Mrs. Ollie received her Masters in Education degree from William Carey College in 1998 at the age of eighty, after having taught kindergarten and first grade for fifty-two years in both New York and Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ollie came to Franklin in 2005, after losing her Mississippi home and its contents to Hurricane Katrina; and

WHEREAS, with her characteristic smile and loving salutations, the enthusiastic Mrs. Ollie is an inspiration to the teachers at Liberty Elementary; after losing her mobility from an orthopedic injury in 2006, she rapidly progressed through physical therapy to regain that mobility, a testament to her iron clad will and unassailable determination; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her volunteer work as a reading instructor, Mrs. Ollie has also organized and directed the Golden Singers at the NHC Place in Franklin; and

WHEREAS, her long and distinguished musical background includes service as an organist and choir director at her churches in both Mississippi and New York, work as an

actress and director of musicals and plays at the Bay St. Louis Little Theatre, study of voice and piano at the Julliard School of Music in New York City, and study of choral and organ at the Gregorian Institute of Music in Albany; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ollie sang with RKO Proctor Theatre Organist Betty Lee Taylor both on stage and on her radio program, won the RKO Proctor Theatre's singing contest at twelve years of age, and organized and directed the Bay Choraliers Community Chorus, which provides entertainment for the Mardi Gras balls; she even stood proudly as Queen over one such Mardi Gras ball, reigning with no small measure of grace and aplomb; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, Mrs. Ollie is the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions for her outstanding achievements, including the Person of the Week award ABC affiliate WLOX TV in Biloxi, Mississippi, the 13 Who Care Award, Mississippi's Ageless Hero Award, the Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year award, and she was named an Outstanding Citizen of the Year Finalist; she was also the honoree of Miss Ollie Day, a proclamation and reception presented by the Mayor of Waveland, Mississippi, in formal recognition of her fifty-two years of teaching; and

WHEREAS, Olive Teresa McKenna epitomizes the spirit of volunteerism and commitment to service that are characteristic of all true Tennesseans, native-born or transplanted, and her lifetime of invaluable and enthusiastic service to children should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we do hereby honor and commend Mrs. Olive Teresa McKenna for her exceptional service to the children of Liberty Elementary School, salute her professional expertise and personal excellence, and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.